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To: District and Sub-District Representatives

From: F. D. Cronin  
Regional Director *F. D. Cronin*

Subject: Labor Needs of Farm Machinery and Equipment  
Manufacturers - Production Urgency and Manpower  
Priorities Program

You will be interested in the following material relative to farm machinery and equipment production for 1945 which was furnished to this office by Mr. L. B. Taylor, Chief, Farm Machinery and Supplies Branch, Office of Materials and Facilities. We believe this statement contains interesting information that may be useful to our representatives in placing the labor needs of farm machinery and equipment manufacturers before Production Urgency and Manpower Priorities Committees.

Farm Machinery and Equipment Production for 1945

The production quotas of new farm machinery and equipment under Schedule B of War Production Board Order L-257 covering the production period July 1, 1944, to June 30, 1945, are in the aggregate approximately the same as in the previous year. This is approximately the same overall quantity of equipment as was produced during 1940. For some types of equipment, particularly harvesting machinery and some of the other labor-saving machines, the 1944-45 quotas are higher than in any previous year, such increases being made at the expense of tillage equipment and to some extent other types. The 1944-45 authorized production of most types of farm machinery has been substantially scheduled for production by manufacturers.

The current scheduled production of farm machinery and equipment for domestic use is less than was estimated by the War Food Administration to be the minimum needs of farmers in order to meet the proposed national food goals for 1945. At the time when the production was authorized it was considered by the War Production Board that greater production could not be obtained because of shortages of materials and component parts. Suggested crop acreages for 1945 amount to nearly 364 million acres as compared with an estimated 360 million planted acres in 1944. The farm labor situation is not expected to show any substantial improvement during 1945.

For these reasons it is important that the authorized production of equipment be realized in time for use.

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Small wheel type tractor production authorized for the 1944-45 period is substantially below the production obtained during the 1943-44 season. During the first quarter of the current period (July, August and September 1944) manufacturers were maintaining their tractor schedules fairly well. For many other types of equipment, however, manufacturers are behind schedules during this three-months period, particularly because of the critical shortage of manpower in manufacturers' plants and in plants and foundries of suppliers of parts and castings to farm machinery manufacturers.

For example, following is the percentage of some of the types of early season equipment which the manufacturers actually produced during July, August and September 1944 of their scheduled production for that period.

Planting Equipment	- 34 percent
Garden Planters	- 18 percent
Fertilizer Distrib-	
utors	- 38 percent
Manure Spreaders	- 41 percent
Moldboard Plows	- 72 percent
Listers and Middle-	
busters	- 75 percent
Plow Stocks	- 52 percent
Cultivators	- 65 percent
Power Sprayers	- 30 percent
Hand Sprayers (double	- 37 percent
acting)	
Hand Sprayers (Single	
acting)	- 12 percent
Tractor mounted Mowers	- 50 percent

Data on the entire manpower situation in plants is not available but the information at hand is sufficient to indicate the seriousness of the problem. For example, (from a study made by W. F. Heesch, Deputy Director of Farm Machinery and Equipment Division, War Production Board) in the Tri-city area, comprising Moline and Rock Island, Illinois, and Davenport, Iowa, which is one of the principal farm machinery producing areas of the country, 14,410 people were employed exclusively on farm machinery production on October 1, 1944. In order to meet authorized production schedules of equipment for 1945, use this area needs:

2,000 additional employees in November
1,000 additional employees in December
1,000 additional employees in January
4,000 TOTAL

The International Harvester Company has reported to the War Manpower Commission in October the need for 2,108 more employees in October, 577 in November and by March would need 3,540 more than now available. If the present rate of decrease of employees continues, the International Harvester Company will have a deficit of approximately 6,000 employees by March 1945.

From all available information the above situation is typical for most farm machinery manufacturers and indicates that the production of equipment which has been authorized may fall far short of being produced for 1945 use.